



The religious consequences of the War in Wales

The abolition of the Church of England

In 1649, the Republic formally abolished the Church of England as the state church, replacing it with a decentralised system of religious governance. Anglican worship was banned.

The abolition marked a shift away from traditional church governance and practices, replacing the Church of England's hierarchical, episcopal structure (governed by bishops) with a Puritan system of religious governance.

Puritanism and the 1650 Act to increase its influence in Wales

Puritans aimed to 'purify' the Church of England of Catholic practices. The 1650 Act for the Better Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales was passed to address perceived flaws in Welsh religious life. Clergy deemed incompetent, immoral or loyal to the Church of England were removed and replaced by English Puritan preachers and Nonconformist ministers. While the Act weakened the Church of England in Wales and spread Nonconformist sects like the Baptists, many Welsh people remained loyal to Anglican traditions or resisted the Puritan ministers.

Social consequences of the War in Wales

The impact on those involved with the war, including the Women of Naseby

- **Impact on soldiers:** Thousands of Welshmen fought in the war, mostly for the Royalists. Welsh soldiers faced high casualties in battles such as Naseby (1645). Many of those who survived were left injured or impoverished, unable to return to their previous lives.
- **Impact on civilians:** Armies on both sides seized food and resources, leaving many Welsh communities impoverished. Civilians were sometimes caught in the crossfire. The war led to widespread displacement as people fled battles and the destruction of homes. The disruption of agriculture and trade caused food shortages.
- **Impact on the economy:** Farming communities suffered greatly because fields were left uncultivated as men were conscripted into the war. Livestock was confiscated or killed by soldiers.
- **The Women of Naseby:** The Battle of Naseby resulted in the capture of the Royalist baggage train, which included women who had accompanied the army. Many of these women were Irish Catholics, which was a critical factor in their treatment by the Parliamentary forces. The Parliamentary forces killed many of these women.

The building of new estates from confiscated land, including the developments of Philip Jones of Llangyfelach

The confiscation of Royalist estates by the Parliamentary government led to the creation of new estates and landholdings, often granted to Parliamentary supporters or sold to those connected to the Commonwealth. This process weakened the traditional Welsh gentry, who had been central to local governance and social cohesion, as many Royalist families faced financial ruin and lost their influence. The Parliamentary regime introduced a new class of landowners, typically aligned with Puritan or Parliamentary ideals, causing tensions with the traditional Welsh population. Philip Jones of Llangyfelach (1618–1674) emerged as a key figure, rewarded with land and titles after the Civil War. He acquired significant holdings in Glamorgan, including Fonmon Castle in 1654, which became his family's primary residence.

Political consequences for Wales

The punishment of Welshmen who fought for the King

After the English Civil War, Welshmen who had fought for the Royalists faced various forms of punishment, including:

- **Confiscation of land:** The estates of prominent Royalist landowners were confiscated and redistributed. Under the Compounding Acts, Royalists had to pay substantial fines to regain their estates or avoid further penalties. Many were already financially strained by the war and were unable to pay.
- **Imprisonment:** Some Royalist leaders and soldiers were imprisoned for their role in the war. Henry Somerset, 1st Marquess of Worcester, a prominent Royalist leader, was imprisoned, and his estates were confiscated.
- **Disenfranchisement:** Welsh Royalists lost political power and were excluded from public office. This further weakened their influence in Welsh society.
- **Execution:** Welsh Royalists involved in rebellions or resistance after the war could face harsher penalties, including execution. Royalist leaders, such as John Poyer, were executed for their resistance in the Second Civil War.

The impact on the careers of the Welsh regicides

The Welsh regicides were individuals of Welsh origin who played a role in the trial and execution of King Charles I in 1649, including the 59 signatories of his death warrant and other key figures in his trial. While most regicides were English, a few notable Welshmen were involved, mainly through their support for the Parliamentary cause. Colonel John Jones of Maesygarneidd was the only Welshman to directly sign the death warrant. He served as a judge during the king's trial, making him a prominent figure in the regicide. After Charles I's execution, Jones continued his service in the Commonwealth government, becoming a member of Cromwell's Council of State. Following the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, Jones was arrested, tried and executed for his role in the regicide.

